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AF/FO FOR SWAN, AF/C FOR BARGERON, AF/PD FOR ANYASO AND
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EFIN, CF

SUBJECT: BRAZZAVILLE IN BRIEF FOR OCTOBER 26, 2007

11. (U) President Denis Sassou-Nguesso will deliver 'a message on the state of the nation' to Parliament on October 27, 2007.

12. (U) "A Dream Come True Thanks to Sassou" banners flew over the city of Pointe Noire as President Sassou-Nguesso inaugurated the construction of a major roadway to link the port city of Pointe Noire with Brazzaville. The 372 mile-long highway contract was awarded to the People's Republic of China (PRC)-based company, China State Construction and Equipment (CSCEC) and the 30-month project is expected to cost \$390 million. The agreement, signed in 2006, provides for the construction and equipment to be provided by CSCEC and the labor pool will be made up of both Chinese and Congolese. The construction of the highway will be conducted in four phases. The 115-mile stretch between Pointe Noire and Dolisie is the first phase of the contract. A section of the road, from Kinkala to Brazzaville, financed by the European Commission in the Congo, was started in 2006. Funds are slated to be granted under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) 1 January 2008, to finance additional transport infrastructures.

13. (U) M. Emile OUOSSO, GRoC Minister of Transports, has fired the managing staff of Chemin de Fer Congo Ocian (CFCO), the railway company, including M. Jacky Trimardeau, General Manager, 1M. Jean Botata, Deputy Manager, and M. Joachim Ndibika, Secretary General, for mismanagement of the company funds and

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the non application of RoC government instructions. Trimardeau was replaced by M. Jean Emile Malinka, former finance director of the railway.

14. (U) Candidates who failed to secure seats in the legislative elections held in June and August of 2007 took their case to the Constitutional Court. The losing candidates protested the lack of transparency in the voting process, the poor organization of the process, and the lack of communicating results of the process. The candidates filing a case against their opponents included: Alain Akouala Atipault against Guy Gantsio Gambou (Plateaux); Jean Adidi against Andri Kissangui (Sangha) and Niciphore Fylla Saint Eudes against the electoral Administration of Poto Poto, the President's district. In a public comment, the failed candidates announced that this will be a true test of the neutrality of the Constitutional Court as the Court, if it rules in favor of the failed candidates, must decide if and how to correct the problem.

15. (U) Spain: A delegation representing private investors from Spain met with Henri Djombo, Minister of Forestry Economy, regarding promoting the sustainable management of forests in Central Africa through trade certified timber with Spanish purchasers interested in timber trade.

16. (U) President Denis Sassou N'guesso communicated, via Catholics priests and mediators of the Pastor N'tumi's National

Council of Republican Party, that N'tumi should take his appointment as Adviser to the President no later than December 31. After that point, the appointment will be cancelled.

17. (U) Members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) met in Brazzaville to continue work started last June in Libreville developing a strategic vision of goals to be accomplished by 2025 for Congo-B, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Cameroon, Rwanda, Tchad, Sao Tome/Principe, Equatorial Guinea and Republic of Central Africa.

18. (U) French Minister of Immigration Brice Hortefeux arrived in Brazzaville on October 24 to meet with Basile Ikouebe, RoC Minister of Foreign Affairs, to sign a three-part immigration agreement: better organization of legal immigration, better controls over illegal immigration, and co-development. Mr. Hortefeux stated in a press conference that this partnership agreement takes into account both the needs and realities of the two countries, country of origin and of destination.

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